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ABSTRACT

This document is intended to assist Iowa school districts and area education agencies in planning and recording the transition service needs of students with disabilities. Its purpose is to provide educators responsible for the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) with additional strategies, ways of thinking, and ways to document transition to comply with federal guidelines established in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The first section is a statement of beliefs which focuses on the importance of transition planning and use of the Iowa Transition Model to promote a holistic view of the student within and across education and adult environments. A summary of requirements under IDEA is then provided. The guide then offers specific guidelines for infusing transition into IEPs through alternately citing sections of IDEA and offering guidelines for implementation and compliance. This section addresses the IEP, transition services, preparing for the IEP meeting, holding the IEP meeting, and after the IEP meeting. An extensive appendix includes frequently asked questions and answers; a listing of federal transition-related legislation; sample IEP letters; the "Iowa Transition Model 10 Critical Areas of Need"; an outline of student self-determination skills for active participation in the IEP; suggestions for parents with children in transition; sample annual goals and short-term objectives; sample statements of "transition service not needed"; sample documentation of needed transition services; a sample summary of transition services; and a suggested checklist for monitoring the transition requirements of IDEA. (DB)

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INFUSING TRANSITION INTO INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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INFUSING TRANSITION INTO INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to assist local school districts and area education agencies to plan and document the transition service needs of our youth with disabilities in a way that meets federal compliance. Iowa has traditionally aimed for excellence in education—best practices and best results for students. In keeping with this tradition, the writing team believes the sections of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) relating to transition provide a solid foundation upon which to build our practices. When viewed from this standpoint, the law and compliance change from dotting "i's" and crossing "t's" to "how do we use the law and build upon it to benefit our students?"

Iowa was a leader in transition prior to the federal mandate for the provision of transition services. The Iowa Transition Model was developed very carefully by many individuals. As it has matured, it has evolved and remains a viable way of looking at Best Practice in Transition.

The primary audience for this document is educators responsible for the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for youth with disabilities. It will provide them with additional strategies, ways of thinking, and ways to document transition within the IEP to meet federal guidelines. However, other educators, human service professionals, and parents of youth with disabilities who participate in the IEP process will also benefit from the information included here.

In 1990, the Amendments to the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), prescribed transition and transition services. With IDEA, we must continue our efforts to improve the way of doing business in transition and the provision of transition services. IDEA is very prescriptive about what documentation is required to show that transition services are being delivered.

Therefore, the major purposes of this document are:
1) to provide a guide for educators and other agency personnel to understand federal mandates specific to transition and the provision of transition services,

2) to ensure state and federal compliance within the transition process across the state of Iowa,

3) to ensure that compliance acts as a "foundation" for achieving positive results for students with disabilities and for ensuring a seamless transition to adult life, and

4) to enhance skills already possessed by practitioners to accomplish the intent of the transition mandate in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

A great deal of information in this document is specific to transition and the IEP process. Guidance is also provided on working with students, parents, and adult agencies. An appendix contains additional material to assist the reader.

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BELIEFS

This document is based upon the following beliefs of the development committee:

- The IEP represents and supports the **vision** of the student and **the student's family.**
- Transition **drives the IEP process** to prepare students for the changes and demands of life after high school.
- Transition is an **ongoing and outcome-oriented process** that includes commitment of resources, collaboration between people and agencies, and decision making to develop individual plans (IEPs) for students.
- Transition allows the entire community, especially families, schools, and adult service agencies, to **share responsibility** in the transition of students.
- Transition planning **promotes relevant, ongoing, outcome-oriented instructional experiences** within the least restrictive environment including community-based experiences.
- **Incorporation of the 10 critical areas of need** (Iowa Transition Model, 1993) as an assessment tool promotes a holistic view of the student within and across education and adult environments.

P. L. 101-476 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

What is the IDEA?

In 1975, Public Law 94-142, originally titled the Education of the Handicapped Act (EHA), mandated a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all children with disabilities. There have been a number of amendments to this Act since its passage. In 1983, the title was changed to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 98-199). It included incentives for transition through demonstration projects.

In October 1990, additional amendments reauthorized the original act and its earlier amendments in a composite law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 101-476). At this time, transition was mandated for all students by age 16. Additional technical amendments were made in 1991 (P.L. 102-119) and the name changed to IDEA-B. These laws are commonly referred to as the IDEA.

The following sections of the final rules and regulations from IDEA (Federal Register September 29, 1992) refer to transition or relate to transition and are the subject of this document.

§300.16 Related services

(a) As used in this part, the term "related services" means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education and includes speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation...counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school heath services, social work services in schools and parent counseling and training.

§300.18 Transition services

(a)As used in this part, "transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within an outcome oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including, but not limited to, post secondary education, vocational training, integrated competitive employment(including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. (b)The coordinated set of activities described in paragraph (a) of this section must—

(1) Be based on the individual students needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and

(2) Include needed activities in the areas of—

(i) Instruction;

(ii) Community experiences;

(iii) The development of employment, and other post-school adult living objectives; and

(iv) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

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§300.308 Assistive technology

Each public agency shall ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services, or both...are made available to a child with a disability if required as a part of the child's

(a) Special education under §300.17;

(b) Related services under §300.18; or

(c) Supplementary aids and services under §300.550(b)(2).

§300.344 Participants in meetings

...(c)*Transition service participants.* (1) If the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the public agency shall invite—

(i) the student; and

(ii) a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

(2) If the student does not attend, the public agency shall take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered, and

(3) If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the public agency shall take other steps to obtain the participation of the other agency in the planning of any transition services.

§300.345 Parent participation

...(b)(2) If a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the notice must also—

(i) Indicate this purpose:

(ii) Indicate that the agency will invite the student; and

(iii) Identify any other agency that will be invited to send a representative.

(c) If neither parent can attend, the public agency shall use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls.

(d) A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the public agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In this case the public agency must have a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place such as—

(1) Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls:

(2) Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; and

(3) Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

§300.346 Content of individualized education program

(a) *General.* The IEP for each child must include—

(1) A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance;

(2) A statement of annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives;

(3) A statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child and the extent that the child will be able to participate in regular educational program;

(4) The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of the services; and

(5) Appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.

(b) *Transition services.* (1) The IEP for each student, beginning no later than age 16 (and at a younger age, if determined appropriate), must include a statement of the needed transition services as defined in §300.18, including, if appropriate, a statement of each public agency's and each participating agency's responsibilities or linkages, or both, before the student leaves the school setting.

(2) If the IEP team determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas specified in § 300.18 (b)(2)(i) through (b)(2)(iii), the IEP must include a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination was made.

§300.347 Agency responsibilities for transition services

(a) If a participating agency fails to provide agreed-upon transition services contained in the IEP of a student with a disability, the public agency responsible for the student's education shall, as soon as possible, initiate a meeting for the purpose of identifying alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives and, if necessary, revising the student's IEP

(b) Nothing in this part relieves any participating agency, including a State vocational rehabilitation agency, of the responsibility to provide or pay for any transition service that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency.

§300.532 Evaluation procedures

State educational agencies and LEAs shall ensure, at a minimum, that:

(a) Tests and other evaluation materials—

(1) Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so;

(2) Have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used; and

(3) Are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer.

(b) Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.

(c) Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that when a test is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

(d) No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child.

(e) The evaluation is made by a multidisciplinary team or groups of persons, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability.

(f) The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

§300.533 Placement procedures

(a) In interpreting evaluation data and in making placement decisions, each public agency shall—

(1) Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement test, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior.

(2) Ensure that information obtained from all of these sources is documented and carefully considered;

(3) Ensure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options, and

(4) Ensure that the placement decision is made in conformity with the LRE rules in §§ 300.550-300.554.

INFUSING TRANSITION INTO INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The IEP

IDEA makes transition an integral part of the IEP process and its documentation. The remainder of this manual follows the sequential steps of the IEP process. Statement(s) are included throughout to highlight the benefit to students in transition possible from compliance with the transition sections of IDEA.

The IEP for each child must include—

(1) A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance;

(2) A statement of annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives;

(3) A statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child and the extent that the child will be able to participate in regular educational program;

(4) The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of the services; and

(5) Appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.

(§300.346)

The IEP is both a process and a document. The IEP **process** provides an opportunity for everyone concerned about the student to meet together, set goals, resolve challenges, and develop a mutually agreed upon educational plan for the student. The IEP **document** states in writing what services will be provided, how the specially designed instruction will be provided, how progress will be assessed, and why the services selected have been chosen.

The IEP process serves as a communication vehicle among parents, educators, the student with a disability, and other service providers. The IEP process is used to make joint decisions regarding the student's needs and the services to be provided. The IEP process allows parents and educators an opportunity to resolve conflicts should disagreements arise. If a solution agreeable to both parties is not reached, parents are then guaranteed due process rights.

The IEP document puts into writing the resources to be committed for the student and is a management tool for ensuring that the student is provided with the special education and related services appropriate to his or her needs. The IEP serves as a compliance monitoring document. It may be reviewed by federal, state, area or local education agency officials to determine whether the student is receiving the free, appropriate public education agreed upon by the school and parent(s). Finally, the IEP is a tool that aids in evaluating the student's progress toward his or her annual goals and objectives and ultimately the long range outcomes the student wishes to achieve.

(Adapted from *IEP at a Glance*)

Transition Services

Transition services. (1) The IEP for each student, beginning no later than age 16 (and at a younger age, if determined appropriate), must include a statement of the needed transition services as defined in §300.18, including, if appropriate, a statement of each public agency's and each participating agency's responsibilities or linkages, or both, before the student leaves the school setting.

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(2) If the IEP team determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas specified in § 300.18 (b)(2)(i) through (b)(2)(iii), the IEP must include a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination was made.

(§300.346)

"transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within an outcome oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including, but not limited to, post secondary education, vocational training, integrated competitive employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

(b)The coordinated set of activities described in paragraph (a) of this section must—

(1) Be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and

(2) Include needed activities in the areas of—

(i) Instruction;

(ii) Community experiences;

(iii) The development of employment, and other post-school adult living objectives; and

(iv) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

(§300.18)

"related services" means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education and includes speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation...counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools and parent counseling and training.

(§300.16)

Notes to the federal regulations (§300.18) indicate that transition services may be *special education* if they are specially designed instruction, or *related services* if they are required to assist a student with a disability to benefit from special education. The list of "activities" (i.e., post secondary education, vocational training, integrated competitive employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation) is not intended to be exhaustive, but provides examples of different types of post school activities.

In the federal regulations, the Secretary of Education defines key terms in the provision of transition services as follows:

- The term "coordinated" means both (1) the linkage between each of the component activities that compromise transition services, and (2) the interrelationship between the various agencies that are involved in the provision of transition services to a student.
- The term outcome as used in the phrase "outcome-oriented process," refers to the results, or intended effect, of the activities on a student.

Clearly, the IEP process for a student in transition requires long range planning:

- to promote movement from school to post school activities
- to allow the IEP/multidisciplinary team to focus on "student outcomes" of the future and not just "yearly goals and objectives."
- to ensure that long range goals/outcomes of the student and his/her family look beyond exit from high school and are addressed in IEP objectives and activities.

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Although the statute does not mandate transition services for all students beginning at age 14 or younger, the provision of these services could have a significantly positive effect on the employment and independent living outcomes for many of these students in the future, especially for students who are likely to drop out before age 16. With respect to the provision of transition services to students below age 16, the Report of the House Committee on Education and Labor on Public Law 101-476 includes the following statement:

"Although this language leaves the final determination of when to initiate transition services for students under age 16 into the IEP process, it nevertheless makes clear that Congress expects consideration to be given to the need for transition services for some students by age 14 or younger. The Committee encourages that approach because of their concern that age 16 may be too late for many students, particularly those at risk of dropping out of school and those with the most severe disabilities. Even for those students who stay in school until age 18, many will need more than two years of transition services. Students with disabilities are now dropping out of school before age 16, feeling that the education system has little to offer them. Initiating services at a younger age will be critical." [House Report No 101-544. p. 10 (1990)]

Benefit to the student: Incorporation of transition in the IEP process by age 16 includes early identification of and planning for the student's post-school goals. It assists in making education relevant to the student and helps the student see that relevancy. Transition can also assist in "drop-out" prevention. It assists the student to develop the skills necessary to be successful in the chosen instructional, work, community, and living environments. It facilitates the identification of and development of linkages with adult service providers. It allows the service providers to become involved early in the planning process and assists in the development of realistic and attainable plans for the student after exit from the secondary education system. It provides a safety net for a student who does drop out prior to anticipated school exit.

Preparing for the IEP Meeting

In preparation for the IEP team meeting, identify potential participants. Be sure to include the student, parent(s), and service providers.

Invite participants in a timely manner. Remember that calendars need to be managed by all participants. Adult service agency representatives, especially, may need to receive notice of the meeting two to three weeks in advance of the meeting date.

Prepare the Student to Participate in the IEP Process

Critical to the intent of the law is the preparation of the student to be an active participant in the planning and development of the IEP. The student is expected to assume responsibility for identifying a career path, suggesting activities and services for his or her own transition process, and providing feedback about the quality of experiences and services provided. The student is also expected to state his/her preferences and desires as well as commit to the plan.

In most instances, it will be necessary for educators to teach students how to participate in their own IEP meeting.

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To prepare the student to actively participate in the IEP meeting, discuss with the student what will occur at the meeting and who should be present. Prepare the student to articulate his/her interests, preferences, and needs at the meeting.

Students should work with their family and schools to:

- Look for information about occupational, educational, and living options; talk with people; and try new experiences to develop awareness of the student's needs, preferences, and interests for the future.
- Find ways to increase academic, career, and personal independence skills.
- Make informed choices and set achievable goals.
- Develop the ability to communicate needs, preferences, and interests to the family, school staff, and other professionals.
- Learn the kinds of things that can be done independently and the kinds of things where assistance is needed. Develop the ability to explain to others the kinds of help which are useful.
- Participate actively in meetings with the school and other professionals.
- Learn to contribute ideas as well as to listen to the ideas of other.
- Follow through on plans that have been agreed upon.
- Ask questions or share information with the teacher or guidance counselor throughout the student's program.

(adapted from *California Transition Guide*)

(See the appendix to review a more comprehensive menu for teaching students to be active participants.)

Gather Assessment Information

State educational agencies and LEAs shall ensure, at a minimum, that:

(a) Tests and other evaluation materials—

(1) Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so;

(2) Have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used; and

(3) Are administered by trained personnel in conformance with the instructions provided by their producer.

(b) Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those that are designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.

(c) Tests are selected and administered so as best to ensure that when a test is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors that the test purports to measure).

(d) No single procedure is used as the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child.

(e) The evaluation is made by a multidisciplinary team or groups of persons, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability.

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(f)The child is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, if appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, and motor abilities.

(§300.532)

Prior to the IEP meeting, information and assessment data should be gathered. In order to determine what assessment data should be gathered, the multidisciplinary team should visualize the student's future through transition planning activities. Consider the student's preferences regarding home, school, and community settings:

- Now
- In the near future (until exit from school)
- In the long range future (after exit from school when other support systems will be utilized)

Identify the environmental demands in each planning area:

- Identify skills needed at home, school, and in the community now, before leaving school, and after leaving school.
- Identify current skills for each anticipated environment.
- Compare current skills of the student with anticipated future skill demands.

Assessment is a structured process that is ongoing in nature. For a student whose needs for transition services are part of the IEP process, the plan for assessment should take into account the student's planned future outcomes. It is recommended that the IEP/multidisciplinary team and other individuals who could provide relevant information be included in conducting transition assessments (e.g., consultants, psychologists, social workers, work experience coordinators, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech pathologists, audiologists, employers, parents, the student, school counselors, special educators, general educators, vocational educators, adult service agency personnel, etc.).

The 10 Critical Areas of Need identified in the Iowa Transition Model provide a "best practices" assessment framework in which to view the transition student holistically:

- Self-determination
- Academic and life-long learning
- Daily living
- Health and physical care
- Leisure
- Mobility
- Money management
- Social interaction
- Workplace readiness
- Occupationally specific skills

(See appendix for definitions of the Iowa Transition Model 10 Critical Areas of Need.)

Strategies to assist in determining the Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP) in relation to identification of the needed transition services could include:

- Observations within all relevant environments
- Student/Family interviews
- Work Sample assessments
- Situational Assessments
- Informal/formal paper and pencil tests
- Interest inventories
- Commercial assessment

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Benefit to the student: Obtaining information from a full range of individuals who have data regarding the student will provide a broad base of information and perspective and a more detailed view of the strengths and needs of the student. This will enable the IEP team to view the student holistically and fully address the needs of the student across environments and curricula.

Invite the Student

The expectation that transition is to be student-centered is clear in the law.

If the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the public agency shall invite the student....If the student does not attend, the public agency shall take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered.
(§300.344)

Notes to the federal regulations state: "The public agency is required to invite each student to participate in his or her IEP meeting if a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services. For all students who are 16 years of age or older, one of the purposes of the annual meeting will always be the planning of transition services, since transition services are a required component of the IEP for these students.

"For a student younger than 16, if transition services are initially discussed at a meeting that does not include the student, the public agency [LEA] is responsible for ensuring that, before a decision about transition for a student is made, a subsequent IEP meeting is conducted for that purpose, and the student is invited to attend."

It is recommended the invitation to the student indicate:

- the purpose of meeting
- the time of meeting
- the location of meeting
- expected participants in the meeting including title and agency represented

(See appendix for sample student invitation letter.)

It is important the invitation be issued in a manner understandable to the student. In situations where written communication would not be understood, other means of communication should be used and documented. (An example might be to communicate the information orally to the student and to have the invitation and discussion with the student witnessed by another individual as to the oral communication and perception of the student's understanding. Written documentation by the individual issuing the invitation and the witness would be included in the student records.)

Benefit to the student: **Pre-planning will help to ensure that the IEP meeting and process are truly student-centered and more relevant to the student and family plans and desires. The adequate preparation of the student for active participation in the IEP meeting requires the student to develop self-advocacy/self-determination skills. These skills and experience in using them assist the student to assume an adult role in work and the community.**

Invite the Parent

If a purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the [meeting] notice must also—
(1) Indicate this purpose;

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(ii) Indicate that the agency will invite the student; and
(iii) Identify any other agency that will be invited to send a representative.

(c) If neither parent can attend, the public agency shall use other methods to ensure parent participation, including individual or conference telephone calls.

(d) A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the public agency is unable to convince the parents that they should attend. In this case the public agency must have a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place such as—

(1) Detailed records of telephone calls made or attempted and the results of those calls;
(2) Copies of correspondence sent to the parents and any responses received; and
(3) Detailed records of visits made to the parent's home or place of employment and the results of those visits.

(§300.345)

(See appendix for a sample parent invitation letter.)

Invite Participating Agencies

If the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the public agency shall invite a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services....If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the public agency shall take other steps to obtain the participation of the other agency in the planning of any transition services.

(§300.344)

For some students, linkage with participating agencies may be needed while the student is still in school. In other cases, the linkage may be needed to prepare the student for or assist the student with the move to post school environments. This is the opportunity for the IEP team to ensure the supports are in place for the student when he/she leaves the school setting. The IEP should articulate these linkages and supports. These linkages are the crux of the transition language in the law and its underlying concept of a smooth transfer from school to post school education, employment, and adult living.

Prior to the IEP meeting, multidisciplinary team members should have knowledge of the services provided by any participating agency expected to send a representative. This will enable them to invite appropriate agencies to participate in discussion regarding the needed transition services for the student and manner in which those services will be provided. The individual(s) responsible for arranging the IEP meeting must identify the specific agencies outside of the school to be invited to attend the IEP meeting for a student. The determination of which agency(ies) to invite must be based upon the student's interests, preferences, and needs. Invitations must be extended to identified agencies in a timely manner. In many cases, this means providing two to three weeks advance notice of the meeting. Assistance in making these decisions is available from transition specialists or work experience coordinators.

Participation will be increased if the anticipated role of the participating agency is clearly defined in the invitation or in communication with the representative of the participating agency prior to invitation.

The IEP Meeting

The IEP process for a student in transition must look beyond the one year time frame usually considered in the goal and objective portions of the IEP. During the IEP meeting, the multidisciplinary team must determine the priority outcomes to be addressed during the coming year from the priorities identified by the student, the family, and other team

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members. The team must also decide on continued placement for the coming year. The consideration of needed transition services should be incorporated throughout the IEP meeting.

(a)As used in this part, "transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within an outcome oriented process, that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including, but not limited to, post secondary education, vocational training, integrated competitive employment(including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. (b)The coordinated set of activities described in paragraph (a) of this section must—

(1) Be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and

(2) Include needed activities in the areas of—

(i) Instruction;

(ii) Community experiences;

(iii) The development of employment, and other post-school adult living objectives; and

(iv) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

§300.18

The transition language in the IDEA focuses on the identification of desired post school outcomes for the student and on the coordination of activities while the student is still in school that lead to the identified desired post school outcomes, creation of linkages between the student, family, and adult resources before the student leaves school, determination of agency responsibilities, and development of alternatives if an agency does not provide the agreed-upon service.

Since transition is an ongoing process, the student's preferences, interests, and needs and needed activities in the required transition areas to support those preferences must be reviewed at least yearly. As the student matures, these should become more specific and should become realistic goals for the individual to achieve. The team should consider all relevant information and identify potential resources, programs, services, and support options.

<u>Student Participation</u>

The coordinated set of activities must be based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include needed activities in the following areas of instruction; community experiences; development of employment, and other post-school adult living objectives; and if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

(§300.18)

Benefit to the student: In order to be a fully participating member of the multidisciplinary team, the student must develop self-determination skills. The IEP meeting and process allow the student an opportunity to exercise these skills. The participation of the student in his/her IEP process and meeting affords him/her an opportunity to advocate for himself/herself. The participation also provides the student an opportunity to make connection with adult agency personnel prior to exit from secondary school. This opportunity provides valuable experiences in interactions which the student will experience in adult life.

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Parent Participation

The parent is expected to be a fully participating member of the IEP team. Transition planning should be a family driven process; therefore, parents need to take an active role in planning for their son's or daughter's transition from school to adult life.

Parents have a multitude of information to offer to the IEP team regarding their child's skills, interests, preferences, strengths, and needs. They can assist in the planning process by providing information to the team about their family's values, goals for their son or daughter and support systems that they have arranged for their son or daughter. The Iowa Transition Model recommends use of parent inventories and interviews as methods of gathering information regarding the student's competencies in the 10 Critical Areas of Need. A concerted effort should be made to solicit that information in the determination of needed transition services, setting of priorities, and development of goals and objectives.

Benefit to the student: The parent and the student are the only two permanent members of the IEP team. Because of the longitudinal scope and the personal involvement with the student, families are likely to advocate in the student's behalf. Advocacy usually results in better outcomes for the individual with a disability.

Agency Participation

The IEP for each student, beginning no later than age 16 (and at a younger age, if determined appropriate), must include a statement of the needed transition services as defined in §300.18, including, if appropriate, a statement of each public agency's and each participating agency's responsibilities or linkages, or both, before the student leaves the school setting.

(§300.346)

Nothing in this part relieves any participating agency, including a State vocational rehabilitation agency, of the responsibility to provide or pay for any transition service that the agency would otherwise provide to students with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria of that agency.

(§300.347)

Participating agencies may be defined as a state or local, public or private agency, other than the school responsible for a student's education, that is financially and legally responsible for providing transition services to the student.

IDEA clearly states that the education agency is not required to provide services that are supposed to be provided by other agencies.

Information that adult agency representatives provide allows the student and parent a wider range of choice in addressing transition service needs as well as for considering future options and supports. Involvement of adult agency personnel also enhances the likelihood that the adult service plan will flow from the IEP and build upon it. In some situations, the adult agency plan may serve to meet a goal of the IEP.

Benefit to the student: Involvement of adult service providers while the student is still in school allows time for rapport with the adult agency personnel to be developed and for the adult service agency plan with the student to be constructed as a natural follow-up or extension of the IEP. This allows for transition from school to the adult community without a gap in service. If a student in transition drops out

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of school prior to anticipated exit, the involvement of participating agencies provides a safety net for that student.

Present Levels of Educational Performance (PLEP)

Priority needs, interests, and preferences for consideration at the meeting should be identified by the IEP team

- The student lists his/her priorities based on preference, interest, and need.
- The parent/family lists priorities based on family values, plans, concerns, and student needs.
- The teacher and others list priorities based on school requirements, assessments, observation, and experiences with the student.
- Other relevant assessment information is considered.
- Potential resources, programs, services, and support options are identified.

The transition services and the supporting activities/strategies must be based upon current and anticipated needs of the student as documented in the PLEP as well as their expressed post-school preferences and interests. Therefore, PLEPs should:

- look at the student in relation to anticipated future outcomes/long range goals.
- include functional information (strengths and weaknesses/ what the student can and cannot do) related to those future outcomes/goals.
- include functional information upon which to base the federally required transition activities (instruction, community experience, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation).
- identify past experiences, including work experiences, directly related to the student's future planned outcomes.

Benefit to the student: Including information from a variety of sources in the development of the PLEP will look at many aspects of the student. The careful consideration of information leads to appropriate placement, identification of needed transition services, and development of goals and objectives. This, in turn, assists the student to reach identified long-range post school goals and results in an individualized program for the student that will prepare him/her to the fullest extent possible for adult life.

Annual Goals

Annual goals that support the needed transition services as identified in the PLEP are developed and needed supports and related services are identified. Short term objectives are written; timelines and responsibilities are established. The annual goals are to be written to improve the present levels of performance relative to the student's desired post school outcomes.

Some of the transition services relate to the acquisition of skills, evaluation and development of objectives; therefore, it is necessary to consider the desired post school outcomes and needed transition services in the development of the annual goals and short term objectives. The IEP, as a whole, must demonstrate the inclusion of needed activities; i.e., instruction, community experiences, and the development of employment or other post-school adult living objectives as the means by which the student can achieve the long-term adult outcomes. If appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation must also be addressed. The IEP records the student's anticipated post school goals, defines the student's needed transition services

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to reach those post school goals, and identifies the participating agency linkages required to meet the service needs.

Please note that merely writing curricular goals or goals to address the 10 Critical Areas of Need is not sufficient. The areas of service identified in the federal law must be clearly addressed and must be clearly related to the student's interests, preferences, and needs.

When appropriate placement to address the goals is being determined, additional consideration of the needed transition services should occur. Remember that those services may be special education or may be related services. Needed activities in the following areas identified in the law must be considered:

- instruction,
- community experiences,
- the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives
- if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

Thus, transition is infused into the IEP process and documented. The statement of needed transition services and linkages is included on the IEP documents, not in separate documents. All requirements of the IEP apply to transition.

As a way of reinforcing the student participation in and ownership of the IEP in which transition issues are addressed, a number of states recommend that the goals and objectives be written from "first person" standpoint (i.e., I will improve..., etc.)

Benefit to the student: This allows for routine examination and adjustment based on the student's progress through the various activities of the past year and allows for refining transition plans to meet possible new student outcomes.

Justification Statements

If the IEP team determines that services are not needed in one or more of the areas specified in § 300.18 (b)(2)(i) through (b)(2)(iii), the IEP must include a statement to that effect and the basis upon which the determination was made.

(§300.346)

Federal law requires justification statements that describe why the IEP team determines that a student does not require services in any of the areas identified in the law (instruction, community experience, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives). Each of the federal areas must be considered separately. (See appendix for examples.)

Benefit to the student: This ensures that the multidisciplinary team reassess transition needs in all areas on a yearly basis so that as the student and family's adult goals become more specific, emerging transition needs will be recognized and addressed.

Required Documentation

Student Participation

Documentation of student participation should be included in the PLEP portion of the IEP. Documentation that the student's interests, preferences and needs are considered

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must be included in determination of transition needs and the goals and objectives. The student's signature as a meeting participant also may provide documentation. If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the school is required to take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interest are considered.

Parent Participation

Documentation of parent participation should be included in the PLEP portion of the IEP. The family's plans/goals for the student should also be documented in regard to transition needs and goals and objectives. The parent's signature as a meeting participant also provides documentation.

Agency Participation

The following serves as a guide to document invitation and attendance by participating agencies:

- a copy of the invitation,
- documentation of other attempts to gain participation of an agency not responding to the meeting invitation,
- reconvening of an IEP team in a situation where an agency did not provide agreed upon services,
- copies of signed interagency release of information forms,
- signature of attendance of the agency representative.

If an invited agency does not attend the IEP meeting at which transition is discussed, in order to be in compliance with the law the local district should document through written correspondence and/or telephone log that the agency was invited to attend. If the agency is unable to attend, strategies to obtain their participation in the planning might include interview with agency staff, participation through conference call, and submission of written information.

After the IEP Meeting

Implement the IEP

Following the IEP meeting, the implementation process begins.

- Review the meeting with the student to ensure understanding of the results of the meeting.
- Relay information to any team members who were not present at the meeting.
- Implement short term objectives and activities, following the responsibilities and time frames identified in the IEP.

Monitor Student Progress

Monitoring of the IEP annual goals and short term objectives should be ongoing throughout the year.

- Collect progress data on objectives frequently.
- Monitor data and activities and identify any alternative strategies needed to meet objectives.
- Maintain ongoing communication with student, family, school personnel, and service providers.
- Continue to give the student opportunity to provide input and to direct activities to ensure activities are leading to the post school goals.

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- Review the IEP at least annually. This must include a review of the student's interests, preferences, and needs and identification of needed transition services by the multidisciplinary team.
- Add new team members as needs arise.
- Develop a new IEP for the next year.

Once their son's or daughter's IEP has been developed, parents should also monitor its implementation. Parents should follow through on any responsibilities assigned to them on the IEP. They should request assistance from the multidisciplinary team or other school personnel if they run into difficulties with referrals or follow-through by adult service agencies.

Reconvening the IEP Team

If a participating agency fails to provide agreed-upon transition services contained in the IEP of a student with a disability, the public agency responsible for the student's education shall, as soon as possible, initiate a meeting for the purpose of identifying alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives and, if necessary, revising the student's IEP.
(§300.347)

The federal law is clear regarding the LEA responsibilities if a participating agency fails to provide agreed-upon transition services. Local schools must have a system in place to monitor that an agency other than the school follows through on the agreed upon plan and, if necessary, to reconvene the IEP team to develop alternate strategies.

Benefit to the student: This action will ensure that a student is not lost between the two systems and will facilitate enhanced coordination and communication during the transition process.

APPENDIX

Questions and Answers

1. Does IDEA specify whom the district must designate to coordinate transition planning and services?

A. IDEA does not require the AEA/LEA to designate an individual to coordinate transition planning and services. It is the district's responsibility to ensure that transition planning and services are incorporated within the student's IEP and to ensure that these services are provided appropriately to meet the student's needs, preferences and interests in the least restrictive environment.

2. Should a student with a disability attend an IEP meeting in which transition planning and services are discussed?

A. Yes, students with disabilities must be invited to attend the IEP at least by age 16 (recommended age 14) and be given an opportunity to provide input regarding his or her preferences and interests before a decision about transition services is made.

3. How frequently must IEP meetings be held to discuss transition planning and services?

A. Transition planning and services should be discussed at the IEP meeting for each student beginning no later than age 16 (recommended 14). The IEP, including transition services, must be reviewed by the IEP multidisciplinary team at least annually.

4. Is the IEP a performance contract?

A. No, §300.350 of the federal regulations makes it clear that the IEP is not a performance contract that imposes liability on a teacher or LEA/AEA if a child with a disability does not meet the IEP objectives. While the district must provide special education and related services in accordance with the IEP, the Act does not hold the AEA/LEA, teacher, or other persons accountable if the student does not achieve the growth projected in the written statement of goals and objectives.

5. Are secondary students with disabilities who are not served in special education supposed to receive transition services also?

A. Determination of needed transition services is required only for students who are under IEP's. Best practice recommends that transition planning occur for any student with a disability, but this is not required in the law.

6. How do reports from work experience fit into transition services?

A. Information from work experience coordinators regarding student performance should be included in the present level of educational performance in the IEP since employment is one of the federally-identified areas in which the need for transition services must be addressed.

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7. What role do parents play in the transition process?

A. Parents share important information about their youth and problem solve with their fellow IEP team members in a meaningful planning process. They assist their youth in accessing educational and community opportunities. They also play a role in assuming responsibility for implementing transition activities that are outside of the school environment

8. How do I find the appropriate adult services for my students?

A. Opportunities to gather information about adult service agencies and/or meet representatives of those agencies are possible through inservice meetings, transition fairs, parent-educator meetings or conferences. Each Area Education Agency has a transition specialist who may provide information. There are also Transition Advisory Boards (TABs) in most areas with members representing many of the adult service providers. Resource guides are available through the transition specialists in many Area Education Agencies. Information is also available through Iowa COMPASS (1-800-779-2001 voice and TTY).

9. What type of services are provided for students with disabilities in post secondary education?

A. Services for students with disabilities in post secondary settings are provided in accordance with provisions in Title V of the Rehabilitation Act. This includes the accessibility of buildings, and providing necessary and appropriate accommodations. Typical services available include learning centers, tutoring assistance, alternate test methods, etc. In most cases, one or more persons is specifically designated to work with students with disabilities to ensure their special needs are met. These programs are frequently called special student services.

10. What types of skills will students with disabilities need to be successful in post secondary education related to their specific disability?

A. Since the accommodations for students with disabilities are provided at the post secondary level in accordance with the regulations in Title V of the Rehabilitation Act, it is critical that the student be self-determining. Typically the post secondary institutions expect the students to self-report their disabilities, that is, the student needs to be able to articulate his or her needs. This, in turn, requires that the student acknowledge and understand the disability including the limitations imposed by the disability and accommodations needed to circumvent it. This includes such things as understanding his or her preferred learning style as well as understanding and being able to articulate the need for alternate testing methods, note takers, tape recorders, textbooks on tape, reduced class loads, preferential classroom seating, etc.

11. Do all students with disabilities require a statement of the transition service needs on their IEPs and at what age do these services begin?

A. Yes, IEPs must include a statement of "transition service needs" for each student with a disability by the age of 16 years or, when appropriate, at 14 or younger. Federal comments related to the IDEA strongly suggest that transition services be included for students at 14 or younger. Comments state that the age of 16 may be too late for many students, particularly those at risk for dropping out of school and those with the most severe disabilities. Even for students who stay in school until age 18, many will need more than two years of transition services.

12. Who is responsible for determining which transition service needs are required to meet the student's needs?

A. The IEP team is responsible for this determination. The team must review the student's strength and weaknesses to determine needed services and include those services in the IEP documentation. As with any other service included on the IEP, the record must show that the need was documented through evaluation, is included on the present level of educational performance, and that the agreed upon goals and objectives are being implemented and monitored.

13. What are the requirements regarding consideration of the student's "preferences and interests" when developing the transition services for the IEP? How are the student's preferences and interest determined?

A. The student must have opportunity to indicate his or her preferences and interests during the IEP meeting when transition services are being considered. To accomplish this, the school district should provide the student training in self determination which prepares him or her to be an active participant in the IEP meeting. Personal interviews and situational assessments including on-the-job observations should also be used to obtain information about a student's preferences and interests. Family members should also provide information to assist in determining a student's preferences and interests.

14. Who must be included on the IEP team when transition services are to be included in the IEP?

A. At all IEP meetings, participants must include the district representative, the teacher and the parent and, when appropriate, other teachers or individuals. In addition, the IDEA requires that when a purpose of the IEP meeting is the consideration of transition services for a student, the school district shall invite: (1) the student; and (2) a representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

15. What if a person or agency invited to the IEP meeting does not attend?

A. If the student does not attend the IEP meeting, the school is to take other steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests are considered. If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting does not do so, the school is to take other steps to obtain the participation of the other agency in the planning of any transition services.

16. If the student turns 16 after the development of the IEP, is it necessary to develop a new IEP with a statement of transition service needs written into it?

A. Planning by the IEP team should take into consideration that the student will be observing his or her 16th birthday during the upcoming year; therefore, transition goals and objectives should be included with appropriate timelines and dates of initiation. However if transition services have not been addressed on the IEP, to be in compliance a new IEP with a statement of needed transition services must be developed on the student's birthday.

17. What are relevant participating agencies?

A. Relevant agencies include public agencies such as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Department of Human Services, JTPA, state operated universities and community colleges, and private agencies such as community rehabilitation service organizations, private colleges, and trade schools.

18. What happens if an agency is unable or unwilling to participate or fulfill responsibilities in meeting the transition service needs?

A. The LEA remains responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education for a student. If a participating agency fails to provide agreed upon service, the district must reconvene the IEP team to identify alternative strategies to meet transition objectives and, if necessary, revise the student's IEP.

(expanded from *Nebraska Transition Guide*)

TRANSITION-RELATED LEGISLATION

There are a number of other federal laws that are related to transition and/or may have an impact on youth with disabilities in transition. The following are some of the laws and the important transition-related points.

1. **Rehabilitation Act**
   - Includes the same definition of "transition services" as is written in the IDEA
   - Requires information available from others, especially education, to be used in making eligibility determinations
   - Reduces gaps of services and barriers to access of services
   - Requires rehabilitation and education to work together in funding and training
   - Section 504 of the Act is for all school-aged persons who have a physical or mental impairment limiting one or more major life activity
     -protects students regardless of whether the student needs special education
     -is enforced by the U. S. Office for Civil Rights
     -requires post-secondary schools to modify teaching methods and examinations to meet the needs of students with disabilities and to make available accommodations, including assistive technology, for learning aids
     -requires post-secondary schools to make every program, viewed as a whole, physically accessible to students with disabilities

2. **Americans with Disabilities Act**
   - Prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in
     -employment
     -transportation
     -public accommodations
     -communications
     -activities of state and local government, including colleges and universities
   - Requires employers to work in consultation with the individual with a disability to determine necessary accommodations in the workplace

3. **Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act**
   - Improves the quality of vocational programs
   - Raises educational achievement
   - Provides services and assistance to students from special populations

4. **Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)**
   - Provides support for a variety of transition programs and services
   - Services mandated for "hard to serve" populations

5. **The Higher Education Act**
   - Provides grants to strengthen institutions (Title III) which could include transition services
   - Provides financial needs-based loans and grants to students (Title IV)

6. **Fair Labor Standards Act**
   Defines situations pertaining to school vocational programs in which students may be considered "trainees" rather than "employees"

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7. **School to Work Opportunities Act**
   - Promotes school and business partnerships to facilitate transition and develop a highly skilled work force
   - Includes students with disabilities, but no categorical protection
   - Calls for involvement of disability-related organizations and service providers
   - Requires school-based learning, work-based learning, and linking activities

8. **Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act Amendments of 1994**
   The DD Act is important to states' transition efforts because of its emphasis on stimulating improvements in service delivery systems for persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

9. **Social Security Income Act (SSI)**
   Federally administered income assistance program authorized by Title XVI of the SS Act
   - provides monthly cash payments and work incentives for eligible individuals in maintaining a minimum standard of living

SAMPLE STUDENT INVITATION LETTER
[on school letterhead]

Dear [student's name],

A meeting will be held on [insert date] at [time] at [place] to develop your Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the next year. You are invited to attend. At the meeting we will talk about how you are doing in school, what you want to do in the future, and what activities your IEP should include for next year.

We will talk about skills you will need as an adult to be successful in living, learning, and working after you leave school and will include transition activities in your IEP to help you prepare for your future and to learn the skills you will need as an adult. You may learn some of these skills in the classroom, some in the community, and some at a work site.

Before the meeting, please think about what you want to do after leaving school, what you can do now and what skills you still need to learn. We would like you to come to the meeting ready to share your ideas, such as:

- What kind of job do you want to have?
- Where will you live—on your own or with others?
- What kind of job training or college would you like to have or believe you need?
- What will you do with your free time?
- How much money can you earn, and how will you pay bills?
- How will you get where you want to go—to the store, work, your friend's home?

At the meeting, you will also receive information to help you make choices. The following people have been invited to come to the meeting to help plan your program [insert names and titles or other identifiers]. Since we will be talking about your plans for after you leave school, [insert names and agencies] have also been invited. These people have suggestions to make, or know about other programs for you to consider.

If you wish to bring someone with you, or invite others you have worked with or will be working with to the IEP meeting, please feel free to do so. A letter is being sent to your parents inviting them to attend.

We look forward to working with you to plan for your transition and to plan your school program for the next year.

Please let [insert name and phone number or classroom number] know if you will be there

Sincerely,

[person responsible for IEP meeting notification]

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SAMPLE PARENT INVITATION LETTER
[on school letterhead]

Dear [insert parent/guardian name]:

The annual meeting to plan [insert student's name] Individualized Education Program (IEP) for next year has been scheduled for [insert date] at [time] at [location]. During the meeting this year, we will discuss long-term planning with you and [student's name]. We will look at what [student's name] plans to do after completing school, what skills [he/she] will need, and what linkages to other agencies may be necessary. The goal is to work together to ensure [student name] has the opportunity to gain employability, academic, social, and living skills important to make the transition from school to adult life.

Because the focus of this year's meeting will be on future plans, the following are some changes you may encounter:

1) Some skills that are important to develop are best taught at home by the parent. Therefore, you and [student name] may be responsible for completing activities to reach some of the goals listed on the IEP.

2) There will be a shift to skills that are important to employment, further education, and community living. The IEP will relate to [student name]'s needs and long-term goals for further education, employment, and community living.

3) You know your child better than anyone and we need input from you. Before the meeting, please consider what kind on job [student name] wants to have, where [he/she] will live, what kind of college or job training [he/she] will need, how [he/she] will pay bills, get around, and fill leisure time. Please identify skills you see as important for us to work on during the next year. We will want to discuss these at the meeting.

4) Because this is long-term planning and is directly related to [student name]'s goals for further education, living, and working, [student name] is being invited to attend the meeting. It is important that both of you be present at the meeting

Since the transition planning will be a part of the IEP meeting, individuals representing adult service agencies may be invited to participate. Through this opportunity to learn about available services, program eligibility requirements, and resources, you and [student name] will be better able to decide what agencies and services will benefit [him/her] after school. The following individuals are being invited to attend the meeting: [insert list of names and titles or agencies represented].

We believe that by teaching the skills needed to live, learn, and work in the community and by providing you with additional information about adult services and programs, we can better meet the goal for which we are all striving—the successful participation of [student's name] in adult life.

Please let [insert name and phone number] know if you will be at the meeting.

Sincerely,

[person responsible for IEP meeting]

IOWA TRANSITION MODEL
10 CRITICAL AREAS OF NEED

SELF DETERMINATION
Competencies needed to understand one's abilities, needs, and rights; to speak for one's self; and to act as one's own advocate. Competencies needed for problem-solving and decision-making.

MOBILITY
Academic and functional competencies to interact and travel within and outside the community.

DAILY LIVING
Academic and functional competencies needed to live as independently as possible and desired.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL CARE
Academic and functional competencies needed to maintain the full range of physical, emotional, and mental well-being of an individual, such as selecting health care professionals, determining whom to contact in the case of emergency, obtaining assistive devices, and using personal hygiene skills.

MONEY MANAGEMENT
Academic and functional competencies such as budgeting, balancing a checkbook, and doing insurance planning

SOCIAL INTERACTION
Competencies needed to participate and interact in a variety of settings in society.

WORKPLACE READINESS
Academic and functional competencies and basic work behaviors, such as staying on task as expected, responding appropriately to instructions, working under pressure. Knowledge of occupational alternatives and self-awareness of needs, preferences, and abilities related to occupational alternatives.

OCCUPATIONALLY SPECIFIC SKILLS
Academic and functional competencies required in specific occupations or clusters of occupations.

ACADEMIC AND LIFELONG LEARNING
Academic and functional competencies needed to pursue and benefit from future educational and learning opportunities.

LEISURE
Academic and functional competencies, interests, and self-expression of the individual that can lead to enjoyable and constructive use of leisure time.

SELF-DETERMINATION SKILLS AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE IEP

The following are important concepts for self-determination which should be taught students to enhance their ability to participate in the IEP process.

- Understanding of his/her personal learning style and compensatory strategies for success

- Developing the ability to articulate to teachers, supervisors, and others "how he/she works best" and any accommodations necessary to enhance the ability to work successfully.

- Learning how to make choices, to follow through on those choices and to accept the consequences of the choice.

- Learning how to self-advocate, including:
  - how to communicate needs, wants, and desires;
  - how to defend an opinion;
  - how to handle disagreements appropriately;
  - how to problem-solve.

Understanding his/her rights and the responsibilities that come with those rights.

How to make decisions, set goals, get support, and achieve goals.

In preparation for active participation in an IEP meeting, the student should know:

- the purpose of the meeting,
- what will occur at the meeting,
- who will be there,
- what information will be requested from the student.

It is suggested the student be provided with sample situations of IEP meetings or, perhaps, have an opportunity to view a tape of an IEP meeting. Role play and rehearsal of the student's presentation of self information may be helpful. The IEP and other forms that will be used in conjunction with the meeting should be shared with the student and to show how the information on the IEP has been applied over the past year. Share with the student his/her rights regarding the meeting (i.e., to be present, to share their interests, preferences, needs, and opinions, to suggest goals and objectives for possible inclusion in the IEP). Also share the student's expected responsibilities in the IEP process (i.e., to think about what he/she wants for the future, to work with teachers and parents to determine realistic goals, to share feelings with the multidisciplinary team, to follow-up on any objectives for which the student is responsible.)

Self-determination awareness activities were introduced in Iowa on a state-wide basis in 1992. A number of LEAs now include self-determination in their curriculum. There are an increasing number of students in Iowa who are now successfully leading their IEP meetings.

The following is a sample agenda for a student-led IEP meeting:

- Begin meeting by stating purpose.
- Introduce everyone.
- Review past goals and performance.
- Ask others for feedback.
- State your school and transition goals.

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- Ask questions for clarification,
- Deal with differences in opinion,
- State what supports are needed,•
- Close meeting by thanking everyone,
- Work on IEP goals all year.

(adapted from Martin & Marshall, 1994)

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN TRANSITION

- Identify your post-school desires, wishes, and concerns for your child in the major transition areas of work, adult living, post secondary education, community involvement. Share and discuss these with your child, educators, and adult service professionals.
- Three to four years prior to your child's planned exit from secondary education, develop a long-range plan and statement of needed transition services to be included on your child's IEP in the areas of instruction, employment, community experience, and adult living skill development.
- Take an active part in your child's IEP to make sure long-range goals are addressed early and updated yearly.
- Make sure vocational training is a part of your child's IEP
- Participate and reinforce the activities in the classroom and in the community that will prepare and help your child succeed in the adult world.
- Work with your child at home and in your community to promote appropriate behavior, good grooming, handling of money, and completion of responsibilities.
- Encourage your child to take an active role in their IEP.
- Allow your child to be as independent as possible with opportunities to explore and take part in community recreation/leisure, transportation, and vocational experiences.
- Allow and encourage your child to take responsibilities in the home that will help to prepare him/her for living as independently as possible.
- Become familiar with adult programs and services in your community or area.
- Begin financial planning for adulthood.

(adapted from O'Leary, 1995)

SAMPLE ANNUAL GOALS AND SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

Instruction

Situation: Student has indicated an interest in pursuing post-high school training in either a 2-year or 4-year college. After discussion of PLEP, student indicated she believes she needs to improve her written and oral communication skills in order to be successful.

Sample goals and objectives:
Student will develop keyboarding/word processing skills.

- Student will be able to type/keystroke at 35 words per minute.
- Student will use the spell check and the grammar check for each document with 100% accuracy of spelling and grammar.
- Student will use learning strategies to assist in improving spelling and writing accuracy.
- Student will request proof reading assistance from teacher/tutor.

Student will communicate needs for accommodation in the classroom to others, including strangers.

- Student will articulate her personal learning and working style to document understanding.
- Student will identify accommodations which make her more successful.
- Student will communicate her needs for accommodation to her teacher and to strangers 80% of available opportunity.

Student will demonstrate oral communication skills.

- Student will develop a plan for oral communication situations (e.g. interviews, expressing opinion, requesting assistance).
- Student will demonstrate use of the plan for teacher at least twice a week in varied settings (school, home, community).
- Student will communicate her needs, opinions, etc. orally to her teachers, peers and to strangers in varied settings (school, home, community).

Community Experiences

Situation: Student plans to work in a city some distance from the small community near which he lives. He believes he needs to learn how to manage an apartment and how to become integrated into a new community.

Sample goals and objectives:
Student will learn to live independently

- Student will complete home management class and demonstrate budgeting for living expenses and minor home maintenance with 80% accuracy.
- Student will complete consumer math class and demonstrate completion of insurance, banking and tax forms.
- Student will complete driver's education class and obtain driver's license.
- Student will open and manage a personal checking account with 100% accuracy of balancing monthly statement.
- Student will assume responsibility for family food shopping 50% of the time

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Student will develop community integration skills

- Student will register to vote on his 18th birthday
- Student will evaluate personal recreation/leisure interests and communicate preferences to teacher and family.
- Student will explore recreation/leisure activities available in the city and explore how to access those activities.
- Student will develop skills in preferred recreation activity through enrollment in high school physical education class, adult education class, attending school or community functions, etc.
- Student will develop and demonstrate use of map reading skills.
- Student will learn to use information section of telephone book and will demonstrate obtaining information in this section of the telephone book with 80% accuracy.

<u>Employment</u>

Situation: Student states she does not know what an appropriate job might be for her after high school. She states a need to determine some employment objectives

Sample goal and objectives:

Student will identify potential long term career goals and identify a career major area to pursue during final year of secondary school

- Student will complete an interest inventory and identify three possible career majors to pursue.
- Student will participate in a functional community-based vocational evaluation to match aptitudes and interests.
- Student will job shadow at least three businesses to identify how her career interest fits within the business.
- Student will interview a worker in each business to identify worker activities and responsibilities.
- Student will attend Career Day at the area community college to identify training needs of occupations and compare to her aptitudes and learning style.

<u>Post-School Adult Living Objectives</u>

Situation: Student's post school goal is live in an apartment with a friend. He believes he needs to improve his ability to manage his clothing. Discussion of PLEP supports the need for development of specific skills to assist in meeting this post-school goal.

Sample goal and objectives:

Student will care for his clothing

- Student will complete home economics and home management class.
- Student will make appropriate clothing purchases (style, quality, appropriateness for use) 80% of the time.
- Student will maintain clothing in wearable condition (clean, pressed, mended, etc.) 100% of the time.
- Student will develop an adequate clothing budget and will maintain wardrobe within that budget.

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SAMPLE STATEMENTS OF "TRANSITION SERVICE NOT NEEDED"

Instruction: Consensus of the IEP team is that transition services are not needed in the area of instruction at this time. The decision is based on student, parent, and teacher reports, school grades, and information from the high school guidance counselor and Clarke Community College special needs counselor. The student has successfully completed all courses required for graduation as well as appropriate available elective classes which would assist in meeting his post school goals of living in an apartment, entering and attending Clarke Community College, and becoming employed in the field of horticulture. He also demonstrates appropriate classroom behavior, understands his disability and individual learning style and is able to articulate accommodations necessary to be successful in a learning situation.

Community Experience: Consensus of the IEP team is that transition services are not needed in the area of community experience at this time. This decision is based on student, parent, special and regular education teacher reports, functional evaluation information, and observation. The student has her driver's license and is able to use the city bus for transportation in inclement weather. She has map reading skills. She has been on a bowling team in the city league for the past two years and plans to continue in this sport. She is registered to vote. She has self-determination skills to support participation in the community—she is able to problem solve, handles disagreements appropriately, has adequate group social skills, is able to state and defend an opinion, and is able to communicate her interests, preferences, and needs.

Employment: Consensus of the IEP team is that transition services are not needed in the area of employment at this time. The decision is based on student, parent and teacher reports, work experience instructor observation and report, written evaluations from past employers and interview with his present employer. The student has worked after school, on Saturdays, and during the summer at a local garden shop and nursery. Prior to that, he had a summer job through JTPA in which he worked on a crew maintaining the city parks and work experience in which he worked as a yard hand in a lumber yard, a custodian in the school, and a grocery carry out person. In these experiences, he has worked successfully both with and without close supervision, has demonstrated excellent work responsibilities and appropriate workplace behaviors. He has had opportunity to have contact with customers and to complete job-related paperwork. His long range goal is to work in the field of horticulture. He plans to continue his present work on a part time basis while attending Clarke Community College. This is acceptable to his present employer.

Post-School Adult Living Objectives: Consensus of the IEP team is that transition services are not needed at this time in the area of post-school adult living. This decision is based on student, parent, special education teacher, and home economics teacher reports, functional assessment results, and student's plans for the next two years. She has both a checking and savings account for which she is responsible. She is able to follow recipes and prepares meals for the family on occasion. She purchases most of her clothing with minimal assistance from her mother. She can care for her clothing, including washing, ironing, and some simple mending. She is responsible for keeping her room clean. Since her immediate plans are to live at home while attending Clarke Community College, it is believed by the team that she will have the necessary skills to live independently at the time she chooses to do so.

SAMPLE DOCUMENTATION OF NEEDED TRANSITION SERVICES

Name _____ SS# _____ Date _____

INSTRUCTION
YES See goal(s) #_____
NO the IEP team has determined that student does not need services in this area due to _____
_____
_____

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES
YES See goal(s) #_____
NO the IEP team has determined that student does not need services in this area due to _____
_____
_____

DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVES
YES See goal(s) #_____
NO the IEP team has determined that student does not need services in this area due to _____
_____
_____

DEVELOPMENT OF POST-SCHOOL ADULT LIVING OBJECTIVES
YES See goal(s) #_____
NO the IEP team has determined that student does not need services in this area due to _____
_____
_____

List other agency(ies) involved in the planning and implementation of this student's present or future transition services.

Agency	Needed Action/Service	Team Member to Responsible Make Contact	Timeline/ Date Contact Completed
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

(adapted from California)

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Date _____ **Summary of Transition Services for** _____ **[Adapted From Great River AEA 16]**

Long Range Goals _____

_____

_____

Using information from the PLEP, indicate transition needs in the areas of instruction, community experiences, development of employment or other post-school options, and (if appropriate) daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. If services are needed, indicate activities/strategies and who will assist, including timelines. Include community agencies if present or otherwise represented. If no services are needed, a justification for this decision must be included.

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Activities/strategies/timelines	Who will assist?	No services needed (justification)

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

Activities/strategies/timelines	Who will assist?	No services needed (justification)

DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYMENT OBJECTIVES

Activities/strategies/timelines	Who will assist?	No services needed (justification)

DEVELOPMENT OF POST-SCHOOL ADULT LIVING OBJECTIVES

Activities/strategies/timelines	Who will assist?	No services needed (justification)

FUNCTIONAL VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT, if appropriate

Activities/strategies/timelines	Who will assist?

DAILY LIVING SKILLS, if appropriate

Activities/strategies/timelines	Who will assist?

Agency/Agencies involved in planning and implementation of student's present or future transition services:

AGENT/AGENCY PRESENT AT MEETING	NEEDED SERVICES	TEAM MEMBER RESPONSIBLE TO MAKE CONTACT AND FOLLOW-UP	TIMELINE
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

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A SUGGESTED CHECKLIST FOR MONITORING THE TRANSITION REQUIREMENTS OF IDEA

Following is a checklist that corresponds to the transition requirements of IDEA. The checklist has been designed to provide guidance at three levels:

1) **Student:**
The checklist may be used to review individual student files and IEPs. Each question should be answered "yes" for every student on an IEP who is 16 or older, or younger when appropriate.

2) **District:**
The checklist may be used by school and district staff to determine whether district policy and programs meet the requirements of legislation. All relevant state regulations should be incorporated into an adapted version of this checklist.

3) **State:**
The checklist may be used by state staff to determine whether state policy and programs meet the requirements of the legislation. Some states may want to incorporate their own administrative codes, rules or regulations into an adapted version of this checklist.

Section 300.344	Participants in the Meetings

If the purpose of the meeting is the consideration of transition services, did the public agency invite:

1. Yes	No	The student?
2. Yes	No	A representative of any other agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services?
3. Yes	No	If the student did not attend the IEP meeting, did the public agency take steps to ensure that the student's preferences and interests were considered in the development of the IEP? (If the student did attend the meeting -- indicate NA).
4. Yes	No	Were the efforts documented to ensure that the student's preferences and interests were considered?

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5. Yes No If an agency invited to send a representative to a meeting did not do so, did the public agency take other steps to obtain their participation in the planning of any transition services? (If the agency did attend the meeting -- indicate NA).

6. Yes No Were steps taken to ensure a non-attending agency's participation?

7. Yes No Were the steps documented?

Section 300.345 Parent Participation

1. Yes No If the student is 16 or older OR if the student is younger and transition was discussed, was parent notice provided?

Does the parent notice:

2. Yes No Indicate that one of the purposes of the meeting will be the consideration of transition services?

3. Yes No Indicate that the public agency will invite the student?

4. Yes No Identify (by name, agency, position and title) any other agency that will be invited to send a representative?

5. Yes No Indicate the time and location of the meeting and who will be in attendance?

Section 300.346 Content of Individualized Education Program

If the student is 16 or older OR if the student is younger and transition will be discussed, does the IEP include:

6. Yes No A statement of needed transition services, including:

a. Yes No --Instruction;
b. Yes No --Community experiences;
c. Yes No --Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives;
d. Yes No --And, if appropriate, daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation?

Section 300.18		Definition of Transition Services (Discussed in conjunction with 300.346, Content of the IEP)
1. Yes	No	Are the activities in the statement of needed transition services presented as a coordinated set of activities that promote movement from school to desired post school outcomes?
2. Yes	No	Does the statement of needed transition services address one or more of the following post school activities: - Post-secondary education - Vocational training - Integrated employment (including supported employment - Continuing and adult education - Adult services - Independent living - Community participation
3. Yes	No	Is the coordinated set of activities based on individual student's needs, preferences and interests?
4. Yes	No	Does the coordinated set of activities include instruction?
5. Yes	No	Does the coordinated set of activities include community experiences?
6. Yes	No	Does the coordinated set of activities include employment and other post-school adult living objectives?
7. Yes	No	Does the coordinated set of activities include daily living skills, if appropriate?
8. Yes	No	Does the coordinated set of activities include a functional vocational evaluation, if appropriate?

Section 300.346		Content of Individualized Education Program (continued)

Did the IEP team determine that services are **not** needed in one or more of the areas of:

1. Yes	No	**Instruction** If yes, then does the IEP include **both** a. Yes No -A statement to that effect **and** b. Yes No - The basis upon which the determination was made?

. Yes No **Community Experiences**

If yes, then does the IEP include **both**

a. Yes No - A statement to that effect and

b. Yes No - The basis upon which the determination was made?

3. Yes No **Development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives**

If yes, then does the IEP include both

a. Yes No - A statement to that effect and

b. Yes No -The basis upon which the determination was made?

4. Yes No Does the IEP include a statement of each public agency's and each participating agency's responsibilities or linkages or both before the student leaves the school setting?

5. Yes No Is the statement of needed transition services reviewed at least annually?

Section 300.347	Agency Responsibilities for Transition Services

1. Yes No If a participating agency failed to provide agreed-upon transition services contained in the IEP, did the public agency responsible for the student's education, initiate a meeting for the purpose of identifying alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives and, if necessary, revise the student's IEP? (If the agency provided services, indicate NA).

2. Yes No If yes, did this happen as soon as possible?

(from *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: Transition Requirements*, by DeStefano, O'Leary, Storms,1996)

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